

*On the President's Message of August 6, 1850
concerning Texas and New Mexico.*

Mr. STEPHENS, of Georgia, addressed the committee as follows:

of this treaty, or any treaty, weighty as they may be, which require legislation for their proper execution and fulfilment may be discharged and performed by the President, unless he be expressly authorized by Congress. It is the duty of this Government, by the ratification of this treaty, to assume obligations towards certain Mexicans which ought in good faith to be observed. But it does not follow that the President is to assume the discharge of these obligations himself. The President may pay out of the Treasury the sum of \$10,000,000 to the Government of Mexico twelve millions of dollars, that was as much the law of the land as the guarantee of rights now under consideration; and yet the President, I presume, would not dare to put his hand into the Treasury, and pay what is due to the Republic, and then leave the authority of an act of Congress to be violated, and the rights of the Government of Mexico appropriated. In our treaty with Great Britain, in 1818, establishing, to some extent, a reciprocity in trade, it was provided that goods and merchandise, and products coming from certain British possessions, should be admitted to the markets of the United States, on the same conditions as the most favored nations bringing like products. The stipulation was, as much the law of the land as the obligations to the Mexicans; and yet it required an act of Congress to carry it into effect and secure the rights under it—that is, to accommodate the commercial laws of the country to suit the

As to the position that the United States troops were left in the territory at the termination of the war, and that it is the duty of the President, as commander-in-chief, to keep them there, and to prevent any other force from coming against them, and against any interference on the part of Texas, until the boundary be settled, I do not consider that it rises to that dignity which would justify an argument to answer the question, "What belongs to the United States by conquest, its Government derives whatever rights it has by any laws be necessary to defend it, and secondly, it is the duty of the President to apply to the law-making power for authority to do so. And until Congress makes some law, the President has authority to hold it by force, and he has no right or power to do so," he speaks, and he has no authority to defend by force the military possession of the United States of any portion of their late acquisitions from Mexico. How has it been in California? How has it been in Texas? How has it been in the whole country, where it is said, when it is said, which it is said to be, that the territory was abandoned, and that the United States bound to defend, entirely abandoned, and that the United States taken possession of by people coming from the United States, and speaking all languages, who have appropriated it to themselves, and who have set up a government for themselves, and who have set up a pope to recognise and sanction? Now, if it be the duty of the President to defend by force

Sir, if I know anything of *conservation*, it is that principle which sustains the supremacy of the law, which maintains the rights of all parties under the law, and which prevents the rights of any one party from being once constitutionally invaded. This is the nature of the law, and it is not a more shameless spectacle be presented to the civilized world than for this Government, after having gone to war with Mexico for contending that the rights of Texas did not extend to the Rio Grande, and after expending all the blood and treasure which was wasted in the late war, to come and commence another equally bloody and much more ruinous and dangerous conflict against Texas for asserting that her rightful boundary does extend to that limit? This is the disgrace, and this is the insult to the people of your country, and the *conservatives* would bring upon you the subject of the law, and the rights of the people, and the rights of the world, to no such class of men. I am for abiding by the order of things as I find them constitutionally existing, until they are constitutionally changed. If they get too bad to be borne, I will be the first to rise up and demand their amendment. But, in case of redress, then I shall be for revolution.

But, Sir, I have said that I am not the subject of the boundary of Texas that I intended, in consequence of the interruptions, I return to the point I was upon. And I again repeat, that if the President should be called upon by Texas to put down illegal resistance to her authorities

There have no tortures for me. The charge of "*traitor*" will be whispered in the ears of the timid and craven-hearted, the last appeal of tyrants. It is no new word of modern usage. It is a term long since familiar to those who know freedom is lost and how freedom may be won. And I here, in the presence of this House, in broad day, that I acknowledge myself an *outcast* from the ranks of the law, and which attempts to fix public odium and reprobation upon their social order and civil organization. When day comes, if it ever does, "down with the Government" be my motto and watchword. When I am *outcasted* by this House, I shall become your implacable enemy. I shall never see the rod that strikes me. And no people who do not place their hands upon the stocks will ever be my neighbors will. I told you that we might as well talk plainly on this subject, and I intend to do it. And it is for you, who have nothing on your lips but "*union*," if you are earnest in your professions, to come forward and assist in the ways and means of sustaining it. I have on a former occasion given my views upon the subject of our differences, and I intend to give them before I close; but I do not want anything from those who are not in the majority in this House of a conciliatory character. If your cry resounds for harmony, peace, and union is *fore*, come and say so; or if you have any plan of conciliation, submit it. I am for conciliation, if it can be accomplished on any reasonable and just principles. I am also for making a clean business of it. I am for no partial arrangements. We sit at the same table and use the same wine. We are all quiet and repose. This, in my opinion, can only be by the settlement of all the questions growing out of these editorial acquisitions upon liberal and proper terms. What such terms? This is the practical point for us now to con-

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FORMATION WANTED.—Whereas **JAMES HANSBROUGH**, a young man now about 24 years of age, the county of Fanklir, in the State of Virginia, in July, 1845, and went to the county of Harden, in the State of Kentucky, and has since remained there, and he is intending to spend some time in Lincoln county, Miss., and then to proceed to the Territory of Oregon. Since his relatives in Virginia have not heard from him, and are not assured of his present locality. By the recent death of father, Elijah Hansbrough, the executor of said deceased anxious to hear of or from him. Any person who may have information respecting said James Hansbrough will please send a letter to me on the subject, directed to Somersville, Virginia county, Virginia.

DAVID HANSBROUGH,
Executor of Elijah Hansbrough, deceased.

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